


Is Your Bill Unusually High?



Here's What To Do

It can happen. You open your Public Utilities bill and it seems much higher than it has been before. It is important to know that there are three main reasons why this can occur:

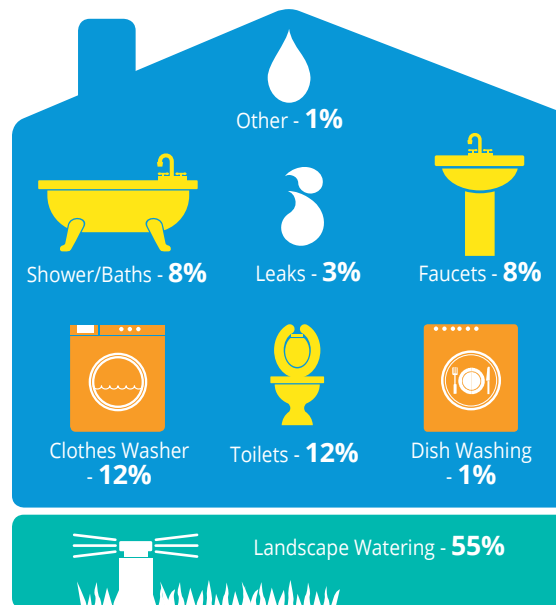
- 1 **You used more water than usual.**
- 2 **You have a leak on your property.**
- 3 **An error occurred when reading your meter.**




1 You Used More Water Than Usual

This is the most common reason for a higher than normal bill. Perhaps you had house guests, you refilled a swimming pool, or put in some new landscaping which required watering. Maybe a son or daughter moved back home for the summer from college. Also, most customers use more water when we get hot weather. If you have an unusually high bill, the first thing to do is to try and figure a logical reason for it.

Figure 1: **Typical Water Use In A Single-Family Home**





2 You Have A Leak On Your Property

This happens quite often and even a seemingly small leak can cause a huge increase in your bill. It might be a leaking toilet or a problem with your irrigation system.

To check for a non-irrigation system leak you will need to find your water meter (Figure 2). It is generally located near the curb in front of your home or place of business in a direct line with the main outside faucet. It is housed in a concrete box usually marked "water." Carefully remove the lid by using a tool such as a large screwdriver. Insert the tool into one of the holes and pry the lid off. Check the area around the meter to make sure there are no harmful insects or other animals.

Then, turn all water-using appliances off so that no water is being used anywhere in the house. Check the position of the meter dial and wait. If after 15 minutes, the dials haven't moved, congratulations! You have a water-tight home. But, if the dials have moved, start checking hose connections, faucets and toilets for water leaks. If you have everything turned off and are sure the toilets and connections aren't leaking, yet the dials are still turning, you may have a hidden leak in an underground pipe. If this is the case, you may need to call a plumber for assistance.

3

An Error Occurred When Reading Your Meter

While the Public Utilities Department has a meter reading accuracy rate of more than 99.5 percent, errors do occur. If you don't have a leak and you haven't used more water lately, it could be that your most recent meter read was incorrect.

Water Meter

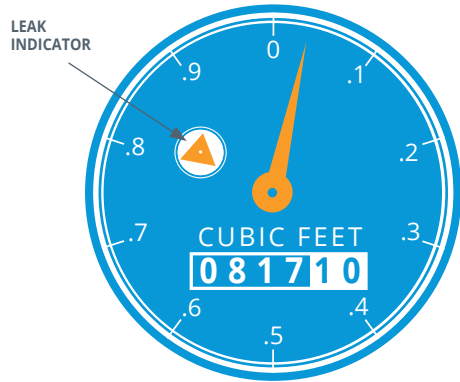
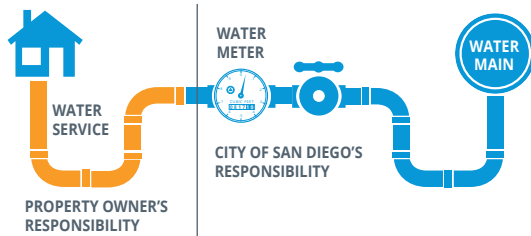


Figure 2: **How To Locate Your Water Meter**



* YOUR WATER METER COULD BE LOCATED IN AN ALLEY OR IN A CANYON.

* THE WATER METER BOX AND ITS LID ARE MAINTAINED BY THE CITY UNLESS IT'S A PRIVATE WATER SERVICE.



Here's What To Do:

READ your water meter. In the picture of the water meter register shown below, note the figures shown under the words CUBIC FEET. In this example the meter shows 81,710. Because charges are based on units of 100 cubic feet, we ignore the last two numbers (the ones with the black background). So, the reading in this case is 817.

COMPARE this read to the ending read on your most recent bill. If the bill shows a reading of lower than 817 (accounting for the water used since the meter was read), your meter read was correct. However, if the ending read on the last bill is higher than the read on the meter, there has probably been a mistake. Please write down the read on your meter and call us at 619-515-3500. A Customer Service Representative will research your account and can issue a corrected bill.



The read on your meter should match up with the information on your Public Utilities bill.

The Public Utilities Department has lots of information online which can help you understand your bill and even help you lower your water usage. Visit www.sandiego.gov/water for information about:

- 💧 **Water and sewer rates;**
- 💧 **Water Conservation Programs;**
- 💧 **How to reduce your bill and much, much more!!!**

Water and money are both precious resources. Armed with all this information, you will be better prepared to conserve both!



The City of San Diego offers water conservation services, including its Residential Water Survey, Multi-Family Survey, Commercial Survey and Water-Wise Business Survey programs to assist customers in understanding their water use.

These free programs are available to property owners and tenants located within the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department's service area.

Visit wastenowater.org for more details regarding survey programs. For a survey appointment and more information, call (619) 570-1999, or email watersurvey@sandiego.gov.